

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4383

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 0036

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, BB

SUBJ: TIMING OF NEGOTIATIONS OVER U.S. NAVAL FACILITY, BARBADOS

REF: BRIDGETOWN 0033

1. DURING CALL ON MINISTER EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HENRY FORDE TODAY, JAN. 6, AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED QUESTION OF MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TIME FOR TEAM TO VISIT BARBADOS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON U.S. NAVAL FACILITY. MINISTER SEEMED PREFER DATE BEFORE MARCH BECAUSE: (A) SOLICITOR-GENERAL OLIVER BROWNE, WHO IS CRUCIAL TO NEGOTIATIONS, PLANS TRIP TO BRAZIL IN MARCH FOR UNSPECIFIED BUT APPARENTLY FAIRLY EXTENDED STAY CONNECTED WITH TALKS ON FISHING AGREEMENT; (B) MINISTER FORDE MAY TRAVEL TO NIGERIA AT SOME POINT AFTER MID-MARCH. AT SAME TIME MINISTER SAW LAST TWO WEEKS IN FEBRUARY AS BAD BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE CARICOM SUMMIT.

2. AS OF TODAY EARLY FEBRUARY SEEMS BEST. IF THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR U.S. SIDE, THERE IS EVERY INDICATION BARBADIANS WILL TRY HARD TO ACCOMMODATE ALTERNATIVE DATES. THE EARLIER WE CAN PROPOSE SPECIFIC DATES THE BETTER. PLEASE ADVISE.

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